

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AU

SUBJECT: OVP LEADER PROPOSES THREE-PARTY GOVERNMENT FOR AUSTRIA

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. ECONOMIC DEBATE IN CLOSING DAYS OF CURRENT PARLIAMENT WAS ENLIVENED BY SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT OF PEOPLE'S PARTY (OVP) CHAIRMAN AND CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE KARL SCHLEINZER THAT, WERE OVP TO SECURE PLURALITY IN OCTOBER ELECTION, HE WOULD TRY TO CREATE THREE-PARTY GOVERNMENT. OVP POSITION IN DEBATE WAS THAT AUSTRIA'S FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WERE MUCH MORE SERIOUS THAN SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT ADMITTED, AND SCHLEINZER CLAIMED EXTRAORDINARY POLITICAL APPROACH WAS NEEDED TO SOLVE THEM.

2. SOCIALISTS ARGUED THAT AUSTRIAN ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS SURPRISINGLY GOOD COMPARED TO THAT ELSEWHERE IN WEST, AND THAT IT WAS DEMAGOGUERY TO SUGGEST SITUATION WARRANTED SPECIAL POLITICAL APPROACH. CHANCELLOR KREISKY CALLED SCHLEINZER'S SUGGESTION INVITATION TO "WATERGATE" IN WHICH PRESS WOULD ASSUME OPPOSITION ROLE WHILE THREE PARTIES MADE DECISIONS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. HE SAID THIS WOULD BE END OF DEMOCRACY IN AUSTRIA. HE WOULD, THEREFORE, RATHER HEAD MINORITY GOVERNMENT FOR YEAR OR TWO AND THEN GO BACK TO VOTERS. OVP SPOKESMEN RETORTED THAT CHANCELLOR'S CLAIM WAS RIDICULOUS OVERSTATEMENT, AND SCHLEINZER ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER CHANCELLOR THEN CONSIDERED SWITZERLAND, WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITS COLLECTIVE GOVERNMENT, UNDEMOCRATIC?

3. PARLIAMENT IS NOT EXPECTED TO RECONVENE BEFORE
ELECTIONS FOR NEW LOWER HOUSE ON OCTOBER 5.
ELECTION CAMPAIGN BEGINS LATE AUGUST. END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. COMMENT: BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. SCHLEINZER'S
ANNOUNCEMENT, LIKE HIS RECENT STRESS ON IMPORTANT ROLE
OF OVP'S POPULAR "YOUNG LIONS" IN PARTY'S LEADERSHIP,
WAS FURTHER EFFORT TO PREVENT ELECTION FROM BECOMING
CLEAR-CUT CHOICE BETWEEN SOCIALIST-LED GOVERNMENT
UNDER KREISKY OR OVP-LED GOVERNMENT UNDER LESS POPULAR
SCHLEINZER. CHANCELLOR'S VEHEMENT RESPONSE, AS WELL
HIS RETREAT FROM PREVIOUS INSINUATIONS THAT VOTER'S
CHOICE WAS BETWEEN KREISKY-LED MAJORITY OR NO
GOVERNMENT WITH KREISKY, INDICATES SOCIALIST CONCERN
OVER EFFECTIVENESS OVP TACTIC. CLEARLY, ALL OPTIONS
ARE OPEN.BUCHANAN

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